

nightmare by reddieforlove

Series: [Mileven Drabbles/Oneshots \[6\]](#)

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: Angst, Canon Compliant, F/M, Fluff, Future Fic, Implied/Referenced Torture, but only in a dream - Freeform

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Summary:

Eleven dreams of Dr. Brenner and only wants to see one person when she wakes up.

nightmare

Author's Note:

This is from a prompt on tumblr.

If you would like to send me any prompts, you can go [right here](#). Anonymous or not, canon, au, fluff, angst, aged up, whatever you want goes with the exception of noncon/dubcon.

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“Do it, Eleven.”

She was standing in the lab, but it was different. Instead of existing as a pristine space, the walls were crumbling around her and the floor was covered in ash. But they all observed her. Papa watched her. But she could only stare at the boy in front of her, slumped on his knees and his wrists rubbed raw from the cuffs that held them together. Bruises littered his pale skin, his dark hair was tangled and matted with sweat, and there was dried blood crusted on his forehead. When he lifted his head, something that clearly took a lot of effort, she trembled at the sight of one of his eyes nearly swollen shut. A violent sob tore its way out of her throat.

“Put him out of his misery,” that voice said, so distant and yet so close all at once.

She shook her head, shrinking back against the wall behind her.

“Please, Papa,” she said pleadingly, curling her fingers in the paper thin gown that felt all wrong against her skin.

“Do it or I will.”

“I can’t,” she cried, reaching up to pull at the wires connected to her temples.

A white hot pain shot through her head before she could and she couldn’t help but remember Mama. Would they change her too?

"Kill him."

"No," she sank to the floor, reaching out towards him as one lone tear slid down his bruised cheek.

"Do it."

"Mike," she sobbed.

"Now, Eleven."

She shook her head, tensing up and closing her eyes for the next shock. Instead she heard a loud bang and the sound of something hitting the ground.

"No!" she screamed, and glass shattered around her.

Hands seized her shoulders and she kicked out against them.

"Hey!"

She squeezed her hands into fists and began swinging them wildly, not caring what or who she hit.

"Wake up, kid."

The voice sounded different, like it was at the end of a tunnel luring her closer. Suddenly she lurched forward and two strong arms caught her.

A sob wracked her body as she wrenched her eyes open and saw the bedroom around her. The lab was gone. Her throat burned and she shook with violent tremors as a hand smoothed her sweat-soaked hair out of her face.

"Just a dream," Hop said, holding her close to his chest.

She clutched at the arm that was banded around her waist, shaking her head.

"Mike," she managed to whimper through her sobs.

He sighed heavily.

“He’s okay. He’s safe.”

El shook her head, remembering the helpless look on his face.

“Papa,” she said, the word heavy on her lips. “Killed him.”

“That’s not gonna happen.”

But it could, she wanted to say. *Papa’s alive.*

“Mike,” she said again.

“It’s one in the morning,” Hopper told her.

She trembled again before finally lifting her head. Wiggling her way out of his arms, she slipped off the bed on shaky legs and grabbed the blindfold from the end of the bed. Hopper knew what she was going to do before she even made it out to the television, grasping her arm gently to hold her back.

“I need to see him,” she cried, pulling against him.

“He’s okay, kid,” he said, trying to lead her back to the bed. “I promise.”

She shook her head, throwing her weight into her attempts to get away.

“I need to see him,” Eleven repeated, holding the blindfold tight in her fist. “Please.”

Hopper released her gently and stared at her for a long moment before sighing again, pinching his nose.

“I’ll call Joyce.”

Her confusion must have shown on her face because he kept talking as he turned to walk into the kitchen.

“I think all those kids are all sleeping over with Will tonight.”

She felt the strangest twist of relief and anger in her chest. *Don’t be stupid.* That was still the rule, but it extended to more than just her

and Hopper these days. Everyone had to be careful. She couldn't do what the others did. That freedom didn't exist for her. It kept them safe, but it didn't mean that she had to like it. In truth, she hated it. No one ever asked her, not even Mike, and she thought that was a good thing. She wouldn't lie to them if they did – friends don't lie – but nothing good would come of saying it.

Ten minutes later, she was sitting in Hopper's truck with her knees pulled to her chest and her head leaning against the cold window. He'd spoken on the phone in low murmurs that she didn't really bother to listen to but she assumed that Mrs. Byers agreed since they were headed towards her house. El couldn't shake the dream. Her head ached with phantom pain from her dream but, even worse, she couldn't stop seeing Mike's bloody and broken form staring at her, all of his fight drained away.

She barely paid attention to the twists and turns of the road that led them to the Byers house. There was a dim light that she could see in switched on in the front room and the door was open before Hopper even cut the engine. It was Joyce hovering in the doorway, her arms wrapped around her middle and her tired eyes somehow still wide in her face. El felt something like regret stirring in her gut but didn't have time to focus on it before Hopper was telling her to get out already in a gruff way that was not entirely unkind.

Her feet hit the hard ground and she shivered in the cold with every step but somehow made it to the door with Hopper just behind her. He murmured something to Joyce but she didn't hear what it was as the silence in the house made her skin crawl uneasily. Then her eyes flickered to Mike, sitting alone on the couch with his legs splayed lazily and his hair sticking up in places. His skin was clear and unbruised and there was no blood anywhere to be seen. Then she saw that he was rubbing one eye as if he'd just been awoken and her relief turned into fully blown guilt.

"Mike," Joyce said gently, much like El heard her speak to Will sometimes.

His eyes snapped to the door and he was on his feet as soon as he spotted El standing there. *Selfish*. That was one of the words she read in the dictionary. She didn't realize that it could apply to her until

now. Tears stung at her eyes as she walked towards him, her lower lip trembling.

"I'm sorry," she whimpered.

His lips twitched into a frown as his dark eyes searched her face.

"For what?" Mike said.

She didn't answer, nearly falling into him. He was whole and warm against her and she swore that he was taller than the last time she'd seen him. His arms wrapped around her slowly, pulling her close against him as she pressed her face into his shoulder.

"Selfish," she cried into his shirt, the word muffled but not enough that he couldn't hear.

"You?" he said.

El nodded as much as she could without pulling away, feeling like a bad person for clinging to him after forcing him to wake up just because she was scared.

"You're not," Mike was quick to say.

She didn't believe him but she couldn't quite stop her fingers from twisting his shirt to anchor herself to him. She could feel the steady thud of his heart in his chest, more proof that he was alive.

"Nothing wrong with it, kid," Hop said from behind her.

She sniffled in response, refusing to move.

"What happened?" Mike said, and she knew he wasn't asking her.

"Had a nightmare," Hopper answered.

"Papa," El whispered.

Mike's arms tightened around her and she knew somehow that he was slipping back into the protectiveness that was at the heart of who he was.

“He won’t get to you,” he said, sounding determined.

She finally tilted her head up to look at him again.

“Not me,” El said, clenching his shirt tighter. “You.”

Understanding filled his eyes and he glanced at the adults behind her.

“Can she stay?” he asked.

Her heart lifted a little and she looked over her shoulder, silently pleading with Hop to let it happen. He looked to Joyce, who shrugged her shoulders.

“Just this once,” Hopper sighed.

El couldn’t bring herself to smile but she knew that he understood when she gave him a meaningful look.

“C’mon,” Mike said, reaching up to untangle her hands from his shirt.

She resisted the loss of contact but he didn’t let go of her hand, leading her back to Will’s room. She kicked off her shoes by the door and let the jacket fall from her shoulders before stepping over the tangle of limbs and blankets to the spot where Mike must have been sleeping before. He nudged a snoring Dustin over before pulling her down beside him. She didn’t know whether she could sleep again but it was worth it to lay beside him, staring at him in the darkness.

“Do you wanna talk about it? The nightmare?” Mike whispered.

She shook her head, pressing her lips together.

“Okay,” he said.

El liked that he never pushed her to talk about any of it, no matter how curious she knew he was. Reaching out, she pressed her hand over his heart, letting it calm her again. After a moment, his hand lifted to lay over hers, a comforting weight to keep her hand against his chest. She could see that he was fighting to stay awake now that he was laying down again.

“Sleep,” she whispered, still feeling guilty once more for making him wake up. “It’s okay.”

“You too,” he mumbled, his eyes already slipping closed.

She didn’t say anything for a long time.

“I’ll try,” El finally whispered, sure that he’d be asleep.

It took a moment for him to answer.

“Promise?”

She nodded even though he couldn’t see her.

“Promise,” she said.

Author’s Note:

As always, please let me know what you think!